

AMERICAN COLLEGES.

The Principal Educational Institutions of the United States.

Sketches of Oberlin College, and the University of Michigan.

We continue to-day our series of articles on the principal Colleges of the United States, giving sketches of the following prominent institutions:—

Oberlin College was established at Oberlin, Ohio, in the year 1834, taking its name, as well as the town in which it is located, from Jean Frederic Oberlin, a distinguished French philanthropist, who died in 1826. The Rev. Asa Mahan, Associate Professor of Theology, filled the position of President from 1835 to 1850. The Rev. Charles G. Finney, who has held the Professorship of Theology since 1835, was President from 1851 to 1866, when the Rev. James H. Fairchild, who has been an Associate Professor of Theology since 1858, was elected his successor.

Oberlin College has for years been distinguished throughout the country for the extreme radical sentiments of its professors and students, who contributed not a little to the formation of that state of public opinion in the North which resulted in the election of Mr. Lincoln to the Presidency in 1860. The institution, which is under the control of the Evangelical Congregationalists, has always been consistent in its radicalism, and from the first there has been no distinction among its students by reason of sex or color. The first class in the theological department graduated in 1836, and contained 14 members. The class of 1841 contained 18 members, the number since then fluctuating below that point, and attaining a total of 240. The first class in the Academic Department graduated in 1837, with 4 members. The class of 1838 rose to 20. Since then, the greatest number of male graduates in any one year has been 23. In 1841, for the first time, the graduating class included 3 ladies. Since then, every graduating class with two exceptions has been composed of the two sexes, on terms of perfect equality. The largest class of ladies was that of 1855, when there were 13, the male members of the class numbering 23, which was also the maximum attained in their department. Altogether 424 gentlemen and 84 ladies, a total of 508, have received the degree of "A. B." from the College. The attendance of students during the past two years has been as follows:—

Table with columns for Theological Department, Senior Class, Middle Class, Junior Class, College Department, Seminars, and Grand Totals. Includes data for years 1866-67 and 1865-66.

The next annual commencement takes place on Wednesday, August 28.

The University of Michigan, which has within the last few years become, in point of numbers, the first institution of learning in the New World, owes its origin to several acts of Congress donating portions of the public lands for its establishment. As early as 1804 one township of land in the present limits of Michigan was set apart for the support of a University, and in 1817 preliminary steps were taken by the Territorial Government for its organization. In 1821 Trustees were appointed, and in 1824 Congress devoted to its support another township, thus making the entire grant over forty-six thousand acres, which, by the terms of the act, were to be devoted to "the use and support of a University, and for no other use or purpose whatever." On the subsequent admission of Michigan into the Union as a State, one of the first objects to which the attention of the Legislature was turned was the full organization of the projected University. This course was recommended in the report of the Rev. J. D. Pierce, the first State Superintendent of Public Instruction, and on the 18th of March, 1837, an act was passed by the Legislature creating the "University of Michigan." By this act it was provided that the management of the institution should be intrusted to a Board of Regents, to be appointed by the Governor; the latter, together with the Lieutenant-Governor, Chancellor, and Judges of the Supreme Court, being ex-officio members of the Board. The outlines of the three departments of the University—those of Law, of Medicine, and of Literature, Science, and the Arts—were also framed, with provisions for three professorships in the first, six in the second, and fifteen in the third. The permanent location of the institution was fixed at Ann Arbor, a charming inland city, about forty miles west of Detroit, the Regents receiving, as an inducement, a grant of forty acres of land as the site of the University. So remarkable was the educational scheme then proposed that Chancellor Kent, in his famous "Commentaries," indorses the opinion of Lanman, writing in 1839, in the following words:—"The University of Michigan is said by the learned and elegant historian of that State to be founded on a wider scale, and with a more liberal endowment, than any other on this side of the Atlantic."

Before any of the departments of the University were ready for operation a system of branch schools was adopted, and several institutions of this character were established in different parts of the State. But these were soon after abandoned, and all the resources springing from the sale of the lands donated by Congress were devoted to the building up of the great central college. In 1838 Dr. Asa Gray, now of Harvard University, was elected the first Professor, and assigned to the Chair of Botany and Zoology. He retained this position until 1842, in the meantime visiting Europe and there purchasing about four thousand volumes, as a foundation for the library, by order of the Board of Regents, who had placed \$50,000 at his disposal for the purpose. In 1838 Dr. Douglas Houghton was also appointed Professor of Chemistry and Mineralogy, which position he held until 1845, when he was drowned in Lake Superior, while prosecuting the State geological survey. About the time of the appointment of these two Professors the foundations of one of the largest and most complete cabinets of natural history in the country were laid, by adding to the various collections made by the State geologist and his assistants by the large mineralogical collection which was purchased from Baron Lederer, of Austria. The income of the University, however, partook of the embarrassments of the times, and

was very scanty and uncertain. The erection of the buildings necessary to the opening of the central institution, the first of which was completed in 1841, and the support of the branches, absorbed the whole of it; and it was not until a portion was withdrawn from the latter, in 1842, that additional professors could be appointed, and the regular collegiate department thrown open for the admission of students. In the year 1843-44, the institution at length got under way, with 70 students in attendance, in addition to a large number in the preparatory department. The last, however, was soon after wisely abandoned. In 1844-45, the students numbered 74, and the following year, 1845-46, the number was 74. At this point the University was without an executive officer, the duties being performed by the members of the Faculty in turn. During this period its progress was far from flattering, and gave but little promise of the brilliant future. The greatest number of students was in 1846-47, when there were 93 in attendance, and 12 in the graduating class. The class of 1849, however, rose to 23, although the whole number of students fell to 77. In 1850 the Medical Department was established, with 95 students in attendance; and in 1851 the degree of "Doctor of Medicine" was conferred upon 6 graduates. In 1852 the number of students in this department had increased to 159, and the number of graduates to 27. Such were the beginnings of what is now the largest school of medicine in the United States.

Previous to 1851, the Regents had been appointed by the Governor of the State, subject to the confirmation of the Senate. But in the amended Constitution of this year, the organization of the University was made a part of the fundamental law of the State, and it was provided that the Regents should henceforth be elected by the people, each Senatorial district in the State being entitled to one member of the Board, who was to remain in office for six years. This provision remains unchanged to this day, with the exception that, by an amendment to the Constitution adopted in 1862, the number of Regents is restricted to eight, all of whom are elected at large for eight years, the terms of office of two of them expiring every alternate year. It was immediately after the first of the above modifications in the government of the institution had gone into effect, that the Regents, upon careful deliberation, filled the office of Chancellor by the election of the Rev. Henry P. Tappan, D. D., LL. D., who entered upon the discharge of his duties in December, 1852.

Dr. Tappan is an eminent divine of the Presbyterian Church, and was well qualified for the position, having devoted himself for years with great earnestness to the study of University education in all its bearings and requirements. He had, moreover, acquired considerable reputation, abroad as well as at home, by his metaphysical writings, and had for some years held a Professorship in the University of the city of New York. From his accession to the Chancellorship of the University to his dismissal by the Board of Regents in 1863, he devoted himself with untiring zeal to the task of building up this seat of learning in the West; and so great was his success that in the course of these ten years he raised the institution from the lowest rank of Western Colleges to the third position in the country in point of numbers. At an early period in his administration difficulties occurred between him and the Board of Regents, some of the Professors taking sides with the latter. The dispute culminated in the summer of 1863, when the Board, just as their term of office was expiring by limitation of the Constitution, relieved Dr. Tappan from the Chancellorship, and elected in his place the Rev. Erasmus O. Haven, D. D., LL. D., a popular New England divine, of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Dr. Haven had been connected with the University as a Professor from 1852 to 1856, and had then been held in high estimation by all who came in contact with him. If he had been made Chancellor under ordinary circumstances, it is probable that his former popularity would have rendered the task before him comparatively easy. But the removal of Dr. Tappan raised a storm throughout the State, and, in fact, throughout the whole Northwest, for the students and their friends were to be found in almost every town in that section of the country. Meetings were held by them on all sides, and remonstrances against Dr. Tappan's removal and petitions for his restoration poured in upon the new Board of Regents on their accession to office in January, 1864. In the meantime Dr. Haven had entered upon the discharge of his duties, having them anything but pleasant for the first year or two. The new Regents, however, made no change in the management of the University, and all the students who had entered the different departments during the administration of Dr. Tappan having now completed their courses, the new regime encounters less opposition and is more efficient than it was at first. The prosperity of the University, happily, was not interfered with by the change, as during the four years of Dr. Haven's term of office the number of students has risen from 654 to 1255.

In the fall of 1859, the Law Department was fully organized, the students numbering 92 the first year, and the graduating class of 1860 containing 54 members. Within the brief period of eight years, this has become the largest law school in the country, the number of students in attendance during 1866-67 being 395, of whom 155 were in the senior or graduating class. The wonderful increase in the number of students in the various departments is shown in the following table:—

Table with columns for Academic Department, Law, and Medical Department. Includes data for years 1866-67 and 1865-66.

The number of students in attendance during the past two years has been as follows:— Academic Department: 1866-67, 1865-66, 1864-65, 1863-64, 1862-63, 1861-62, 1860-61, 1859-60, 1858-59, 1857-58, 1856-57, 1855-56, 1854-55, 1853-54, 1852-53, 1851-52, 1850-51, 1849-50, 1848-49, 1847-48, 1846-47, 1845-46, 1844-45, 1843-44, 1842-43, 1841-42, 1840-41, 1839-40, 1838-39, 1837-38, 1836-37, 1835-36, 1834-35, 1833-34, 1832-33, 1831-32, 1830-31, 1829-30, 1828-29, 1827-28, 1826-27, 1825-26, 1824-25, 1823-24, 1822-23, 1821-22, 1820-21, 1819-20, 1818-19, 1817-18, 1816-17, 1815-16, 1814-15, 1813-14, 1812-13, 1811-12, 1810-11, 1809-10, 1808-09, 1807-08, 1806-07, 1805-06, 1804-05, 1803-04, 1802-03, 1801-02, 1800-01, 1799-00, 1798-99, 1797-98, 1796-97, 1795-96, 1794-95, 1793-94, 1792-93, 1791-92, 1790-91, 1789-90, 1788-89, 1787-88, 1786-87, 1785-86, 1784-85, 1783-84, 1782-83, 1781-82, 1780-81, 1779-80, 1778-79, 1777-78, 1776-77, 1775-76, 1774-75, 1773-74, 1772-73, 1771-72, 1770-71, 1769-70, 1768-69, 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1101-02, 1100-01, 1099-00, 1098-99, 1097-98, 1096-97, 1095-96, 1094-95, 1093-94, 1092-93, 1091-92, 1090-91, 1089-90, 1088-89, 1087-88, 1086-87, 1085-86, 1084-85, 1083-84, 1082-83, 1081-82, 1080-81, 1079-80, 1078-79, 1077-78, 1076-77, 1075-76, 1074-75, 1073-74, 1072-73, 1071-72, 1070-71, 1069-70, 1068-69, 1067-68, 1066-67, 1065-66, 1064-65, 1063-64, 1062-63, 1061-62, 1060-61, 1059-60, 1058-59, 1057-58, 1056-57, 1055-56, 1054-55, 1053-54, 1052-53, 1051-52, 1050-51, 1049-50, 1048-49, 1047-48, 1046-47, 1045-46, 1044-45, 1043-44, 1042-43, 1041-42, 1040-41, 1039-40, 1038-39, 1037-38, 1036-37, 1035-36, 1034-35, 1033-34, 1032-33, 1031-32, 1030-31, 1029-30, 1028-29, 1027-28, 1026-27, 1025-26, 1024-25, 1023-24, 1022-23, 1021-22, 1020-21, 1019-20, 1018-19, 1017-18, 1016-17, 1015-16, 1014-15, 1013-14, 1012-13, 1011-12, 1010-11, 1009-10, 1008-09, 1007-08, 1006-07, 1005-06, 1004-05, 1003-04, 1002-03, 1001-02, 1000-01, 999-00, 998-99, 997-98, 996-97, 995-96, 994-95, 993-94, 992-93, 991-92, 990-91, 989-90, 988-89, 987-88, 986-87, 985-86, 984-85, 983-84, 982-83, 981-82, 980-81, 979-80, 978-79, 977-78, 976-77, 975-76, 974-75, 973-74, 972-73, 971-72, 970-71, 969-70, 968-69, 967-68, 966-67, 965-66, 964-65, 963-64, 962-63, 961-62, 960-61, 959-60, 958-59, 957-58, 956-57, 955-56, 954-55, 953-54, 952-53, 951-52, 950-51, 949-50, 948-49, 947-48, 946-47, 945-46, 944-45, 943-44, 942-43, 941-42, 940-41, 939-40, 938-39, 937-38, 936-37, 935-36, 934-35, 933-34, 932-33, 931-32, 930-31, 929-30, 928-29, 927-28, 926-27, 925-26, 924-25, 923-24, 922-23, 921-22, 920-21, 919-20, 918-19, 917-18, 916-17, 915-16, 914-15, 913-14, 912-13, 911-12, 910-11, 909-10, 908-09, 907-08, 906-07, 905-06, 904-05, 903-04, 902-03, 901-02, 900-01, 899-00, 898-99, 897-98, 896-97, 895-96, 894-95, 893-94, 892-93, 891-92, 890-91, 889-90, 888-89, 887-88, 886-87, 885-86, 884-85, 883-84, 882-83, 881-82, 880-81, 879-80, 878-79, 877-78, 876-77, 875-76, 874-75, 873-74, 872-73, 871-72, 870-71, 869-70, 868-69, 867-68, 866-67, 865-66, 864-65, 863-64, 862-63, 861-62, 860-61, 859-60, 858-59, 857-58, 856-57, 855-56, 854-55, 853-54, 852-53, 851-52, 850-51, 849-50, 84